

THE GAZETTE

Published for members of the SHAPE/Chièvres, Brussels and Schinnen communities

Benelux News

Briefs

Women's Equality Day

A special observance will be held Aug. 28 at the Caserne Daumerie Chapel from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. For more information, call DSN 361-5235 or +32(0)68275235.

Chièvres Library

The Chièvres Library will be operating at reduced hours through Saturday. Open from noon to 3 p.m.

Dogs' Day Out Volunteers

MWR is looking for volunteers for Dogs' Day Out Aug. 25 at the SHAPE Fest Tent. To sign up, call DSN 361-5436 or +32(0)68-275436.

Passport Services

USAG Benelux Passport Agent services in Brussels will be unavailable until Aug. 19. Passport services will resume on Aug. 20 by appointment only. For passport services during this time, contact the U.S. Embassy in Brussels.

No Aug. 24 Issue

The next Gazette issue will be released Aug. 31. Check the USAG Benelux Facebook page at your location and the USAG Benelux website for the latest community updates.



Discover the Flower Carpet in Brussels

Every two years, the Flower Carpet is on display in the Grand-Place in Brussels. About 120 volunteers are needed to put together the giant floral puzzle with more than 500,000 begonias. (Courtesy photo)

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Military OneSource benefits extended to vets, families for full year after separation

By DOD News

Defense Media Activity

Eligibility for Military OneSource benefits have been extended from the current 180 days to 365 days after separation or retirement from military service to ensure all service members and families have access to comprehensive support as they transition to civilian life, Defense Department officials announced today.

This change goes into effect immediately, in accordance with the John S. McCain National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2019 that President Donald J. Trump signed today.

Military OneSource provides information, resources and support for active-duty, National Guard and reserve service members, their families and survivors. Provided at no cost, Military OneSource gives exclusive access to programs, tools, and benefits designed to help ensure service members and their families are mission-ready and able to thrive in both their military and post-military lives.

“Each person is unique, and so is each military-to-civilian transition,” said. A.T. Johnston, deputy assistant secretary of defense for military community and family policy. “We want all of Military OneSource’s resources to be there when someone needs them -- whether it is a day, a week or many months after their transition to civilian life.”

WIDE RANGE OF SERVICES

As a DoD program, Military OneSource offers a wide range of services designed exclusively for the military community. Services include help with relocation, tax support, financial planning, and health and wellness coaching, as well as confidential nonmedical counseling and specialty consultations for spouse employment, education, adoption, elder care, special needs and much more.

“Military OneSource is powered by people with extensive knowledge and training in meeting the needs of our military



Graphic courtesy of Military OneSource.

community, many of whom have also served or lived in military families,” explained Lee Kelley, program director of the Nonmedical Counseling Program Office within military community and family policy. “We’re dedicated to providing expert, proven, and practical support and information to our service members and their families to help them achieve their goals and live their best military life.”

Military OneSource services are accessible 24/7, service members and family members can call Military OneSource at 800-342-9647 or go to the Military OneSource website. To explore additional benefits that may be available through the Department of Veterans Affairs, go to <https://explore.va.gov/>. ♦

Commander.....Col. Sean Hunt Kuester

Public Affairs Officer.....Marie-Lise Baneton

Editor.....Christophe Morel

Staff Writers.....Rita Hoefnagels
Julie Piron
Jessica Ryan

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Garrison brings “one-stop shop” event to Benelux community

By Jessica Ryan

USAG Benelux Public Affairs

Moving to U.S. Army Garrison Benelux can feel like a whirlwind experience. As newcomers are in-processing to their new duty station, they may feel overwhelmed with taking in too much information in a short period of time.

To make people feel more welcomed to the community, Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation hosted the first Benelux Welcome Expo Aug. 11 at the Community Activity Center on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium. Called a “one-stop shop,” the expo was an opportunity for community members, both new and seasoned, to meet with different organizations at the garrison and SHAPE.

“You don’t know what you don’t know,” said Bill Schaffer, MWR business and recreation division chief. “Events like these help people find out about new programs and activities available to them. They will get good takeaways.”

In addition to learning about different organizations, attendees were able to save themselves time and extra trips during in-processing. For instance, Becky Walenda, an Army spouse, met with the Child and Youth Services staff. She made sure that her family was registered in the WebTrac system so they can use CYS and MWR services.

“It was very helpful to talk to people one-on-one, face-to-face,” she said. “I would encourage other newcomers to come to these events to seek the resources and find where you could fit into the community.”

NATO ID cardholders were also welcomed to attend and get information. Karina Heise, a German Army spouse, came to the event with her family. Even though she has lived in



Reina Coert-Metcalf (left), functional administrator for Child and Youth Services, helps Becky Walenda (right) and her son with processing their information in the WebTrac system during the Benelux Welcome Expo Aug. 11, 2018, on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium. (U.S. Army photo by Jessica Ryan)

the community for a year, she still discovered new resources for her family.

“We came to the event, because it was opened to all NATO members,” she said. “I got a lot of great information about volunteering and CYS options that I didn’t know about before.”

According to Shawna Morton, MWR special events coordinator, the garrison plans to host the events annually during the summer as newcomers are getting settled in the community.

For those who missed the event, Morton said that people are always welcomed to ask questions and get information at MWR facilities.

“Our front-door facilities are always open to them. They can always reach out to us,” she said.

Attendees can also visit <https://benelux.armymwr.com> in addition to <https://SHAPE2Day.com> for information on SHAPE organizations.

The next Benelux Welcome Expo will be held in Schinnen Saturday at Schinnen Recreation Center from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. More information can be found at <https://schinnen.armymwr.com>. The NATO Joint Top-III Association will host a BBQ and Potluck Event at the 3 Star Recreation Center in Brussels Aug. 31 starting at 5:30 p.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring a side dish to the potluck. For more information, email hqnatointopIII@gmail.com (the III are uppercase i’s). ♦



Heather Poynter and Air Force Tech. Sgt. Richard Poynter speak to a representative at the Benelux Welcome Expo Aug. 11, 2018, on Chièvres Air Base, Belgium. (U.S. Army photo by Jessica Ryan)

Windows 10 security update coming soon to computers in Europe, Africa

By William King

2d Theater Signal Brigade

Your Microsoft Windows 10 Operating System is about to get more secure.

Beginning Aug. 20, all networked computers within the European and African theaters will receive an automatic mandatory software upgrade to the latest version of Windows 10 (Fall Creators Update v1709).

The update will enhance the defensive posture of the network in order to counter adversary activities by enabling all security features available with our current Windows 10 Operating System," said Dan Finley, director of the Army Enterprise Service Desk – Europe & Africa (119).

No action is required from users – the update will be installed remotely by 119 at a rate of 1,000 computers per night and is scheduled to be completed by Oct. 1.

Users can request the update themselves through



U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Johnnie Robinson, 2nd Theater Signal Brigade command group noncommissioned officer, uses a government computer with Windows 10 operating system, Oct. 2, 2017 in Wiesbaden, Germany. (U.S. Army photo by William B. King)

the software center on their computers, but it will require 3.5 hours and several restarts to fully install. Users are advised to first read the full installation instructions on the 119 portal before choosing this option.

The upgrade has been thoroughly tested by Microsoft, the Department of Defense, U.S. Army Cyber Command, U.S. Army Network Enterprise Technology Command, and the 2d Theater Signal Brigade with tenant units throughout the theater. In the unlikely event that the upgrade causes a disruption to your

computer please call DSN 119 so the problem can be quickly addressed.

For more information visit the 119 portal at www.119.army.mil (CAC required). ♦

WWI Commemoration in Flanders

The city of Heuvelland, Belgium, will host the American Commemorative Day event Aug. 26 at the Kemmel Market square and surrounding areas. The event begins at noon with a small parade followed by speeches by city and U.S. Embassy officials.

From noon to 6 p.m., the following events are planned:

- WWI aircraft flyover (2,000 poppies will be dropped by the aircraft over the market square – donated by the American Legion Auxiliary)
- Apple Pie contest: Registration open until 2:30 p.m. Judging starts at 3 p.m.
- Horseshoe competition: Registration open until 1 p.m. Competition begins at 1 p.m.
- Softball game: Belgians vs. Americans: 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
- Children's games: 12:30 p.m. to 4 p.m.
- Mechanical Bull (free usage)

- Food vendors (to include the American Legion BBQ, Boy Scouts & Girl Scouts)
- Music by the SHAPE International Band
- Line dancing
- Bike tours of the battlefield – to include tours of the cold war bunker and Bayernwald Trenches (no entrance fee & bikes will be made available)
- WWI static display of American uniforms and equipment (by reenactors)

The purpose of the American Day event is to show life in America during the time of the World War I and to commemorate the actions of the U.S. 27th & 30th Division during August and September 1918 in the Kemmel area.

More information can be obtained by emailing americanday2018@gmail.com or by visiting www.americanday2018.weebly.com and www.facebook.com/americanday2018.

ALL COMMUNITIES

Government Driver's License

- Per Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) decision, the Army Accident Avoidance Training online is no longer required to obtain a government vehicle driver's license. For more information, call DSN 366-6603.

2018 U.S. Elections

- If you want to vote in this year's elections, please make sure that you register for an absentee ballot. Even if you registered for an absentee ballot in previous elections, please remember that most states require voter registration to be updated or validated annually. This can be done by completing the Federal Post Card Application, or FPCA, and sending it to the elections administrator in your state. For more information, contact the Voting Assistance Officer for USAG Benelux, at DSN 366-6192 o +32(0)65-326192 or visit the Federal Voting Assistance Program website at www.fvap.gov.

Sept. 1

- **BOSS Life Skills Event: Strong Viking 13K** - Service members will participate in a team building obstacle course. Transportation and run ticket cost will be covered. Departure time and meeting location will be provided after sign up. Participants will need to bring money for meals and personal expenses. For registration information, email the BOSS program at usarmy.benelux.id-europe.mbx.boss-program@mail.mil.

The following are VTC-projected classes. For information about and to register for VTC classes, contact

Army Community Service at your location:

- For SHAPE: DSN 366-6824 or +32 (0)65-326824
- For Brussels: DSN 368-9783 or +32 (0)2-7179783
- For Schinnen: DSN 360-7500 or +31 (0)46-4437500

Aug. 23

- **Positive Parenting** - Learn techniques on how to teach your children to control themselves from 10 a.m. to noon.

Sept. 11 and 25

- **Couple's Communication** - The class will be from 10 a.m. to noon.

BRUSSELS COMMUNITY

See also above in "All Communities."

24-Hour Fitness

- Eligible users may register their ID card to gain entry into the Brussels Fitness Center during non-regular hours. Patrons will be able to knock out some cardio, lift weights, and improve their overall fitness and health. To get access, visit the Brussels Fitness Center or call DSN 368-9667 or + 32 (0)2-717-9667.

Every Monday and Thursday

- **Lunchtime Yoga** - Relax and refresh during the work day from 12:15 p.m. to 1 p.m. at the Brussels Fitness Center. For more information, call DSN 368-9667 or +32 (0)2-7179667.

Every Thursday and Friday

- **Community Movie Night** - Enjoy free entertainment at the 3 Star Recreation Center starting at 6:30 p.m. For more information, call DSN 368-9822 or +32 (0)2-7179822.

Every Friday

- **3 Star Recreation Night** - Join the Brussels community for games, cards, music and movies starting at 5 p.m. at the 3 Star Recreation Center. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Line dancing will start at 7 p.m. on the first and third Friday of the month. Karaoke will be held on the second and fourth Friday of the month starting at 6 p.m. U.S. Military, NATO, U.S. Embassy and mission cardholders are welcome. For more information, call DSN 368-9822 or +32 (0)2-7179822.

August Fitness Challenge

- **Burpees** - How many burpees can you complete in August? The Brussels Fitness Center staff will get you registered and help you track your progress. For more information, call DSN 368-9667 or +32 (0)2-7179667.

Aug. 20

- **BOSS Life Skills: Basic Automotive Paint Care** - U.S. single and geographically-separated service members of any branch of service and rank are eligible to participate in the class held 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Brussels Auto Skills Center. Register online at <https://brussels.armymwr.com>.

Aug. 23

- **3 Star Dinner Special "BBQ Chicken and Ribs"** - Starts at 5:30 p.m. Cost is \$13 for adults and \$6 for kids. The alternative kids menu is chicken strips with potato wedges for \$5. Reservations are required by Aug. 21 and can be made at reservations3star@yahoo.com.



Aug. 24

- **End of Summer Splash** - Join the Child & Youth Services for an end of summer barbecue for youth and their parents! Held at the Sterrebeek Annex. Open from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Aug. 31

- **Welcome to Brussels BBQ and Info Fair** - Hosted by the HQ NATO Joint Top-III Association. Starts at 5:30 p.m. at the 3 Star Recreation Center. Representatives from MWR activities and facilities, community programs, Family Readiness Groups, private organizations, clubs, and more will gather in one spot to allow newcomers to obtain information and network. For more details, email hqnatojointtopIII@gmail.com.

Sept. 7

- **Flag Football Intramural League sign-ups** - League will run from September through October. Registration deadline is Sept. 7. If you are 18 years of age, graduated from high school and love flag football, the league is for you! U.S., NATO, U.S. Embassy and U.S. Mission are welcome. For more information, call the Brussels Fitness Center at DSN 366-9667 or +32 (0)2-7179667.

SCHINNEN/BRUNSSUM COMMUNITY

See also page 5 in "All Communities."

Schinnen MP Desk New Phone Number

- The Schinnen Military Police Desk can be reached at the following new phone number: DSN 597-4555 or +31 (0)45-5340555.

AAFES – Schinnen Troop Store

- All MCSS merchandise – Army & Air Force – will be moving from the Schinnen Exchange to the Military Clothing Sales Store on Geilenkirchen NATO Air Base. Please excuse the inconvenience. To keep informed on this and other events in-store, "like" the Schinnen Troop Store Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/SchinnenTroopStore/>

Through Aug. 19

- **2018 Summer Reading Program** - Open to all U.S. and NATO ID cardholders up to age 18 through Aug. 19. Children interested in this program should register at <https://brunssumlibrary.beanstack.org>. Children will check out and read books from the JFC HQ Brunssum Library and receive a variety of prizes for the number of minutes they read. Preschool children may earn prizes by having books read aloud to them. For more information call +31 (0)45-5262669 or +31 (0)45-5262469. JFC HQ Library is open to all U.S. and NATO ID cardholders in the Tri-Border Community and is located next to B&S Central Store Bldg. 604.

Through Sept. 15

- **Bowling Center** - Kids bowl free at the Schinnen Bowling Center with a Bowling Pass. Registration is open until Sept. 15. To sign up, go to www.kidsbowlfree.com/Army.

Aug. 18

- **Benelux Expo 2018** - Got questions about the community? Learn about Family and MWR facilities, community programs, private organizations, clubs, and more in the Tri-Border Community! Held at the Schinnen Recreation Center from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. For more information, visit <https://schinnen.armymwr.com>.
- **American Spouses Club** - Come meet us and join or renew your membership at the USAG Benelux Schinnen Welcome Expo on Saturday, August 18 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Schinnen Recreation Center. We are happy to answer your questions and tell you more about our wonderful organization.



Aug. 23

- **Parent Advisory Council Meeting** - Held from noon to 12:45 p.m. Save money on your childcare bill. Earn participation points by attending which count toward a 10% discount fee reduction. Come and share your thoughts and suggestions and get information on Child and Youth Services programs. A light lunch or snack will be available. Register at Parent Central Services in JFC Brunssum Bldg. H-602. For more information, call DSN 606-244-3121/2023 or +31 (0)45-526-3121/2023.

Aug. 29

- **Summer Reading Program Draw of the Winners of Super Prizes** - Come and join the JFC Brunssum Library Staff at 6 p.m. in the JFC Library. Children and young adults, who completed the Summer Reading Program, will be in the pool from which the winners will be drawn. For more information, contact the Library at +31 (0)45-5262669 or DSN 606-2442669.

Sept. 19-20

- **Veteran's Administration** - Are you a service member or veteran with questions regarding VA benefits? Make a One-On-One Appointment! The Veteran's Administration (VA) will have a representative at the JFC Brunssum Library Conference Room from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. to meet with anyone who would like a one-on-one appointment. If you have any questions about your Veteran's benefits, now or in the future, this is the

person to speak with. To schedule an appointment, call DSN 606-2443848 or +31 (0)45-5263848.

Sept. 20-21

- **Host Nation Newcomer's Orientation & Cultural Tour** - From 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Schinnen ACS. All newcomers and spouses are invited to learn about their new community, including local customs, culture, and language. On day one, explore the Dutch culture with an introduction to the language and get an overview of Tri-Border services. On day two, go beyond the gate to visit a few local attractions and shopping areas and learn how to use the local train system. For more information or to register, call DSN 360-7500 or +31 (0)46-4437500.



SHAPE/CHIÈVRES COMMUNITY

See also page 5 in "All Communities."

Every First Week of the Month

- **Intro to Gym Machines** - The SHAPE Sports and Fitness Center hosts this walk-thru Tuesday at 10 a.m. and Thursday at 6 p.m. Book an appointment at the fitness center.

Every Monday and Wednesday

- **Circuit Training (Stroller Friendly)** - Join the Chièvres Fitness Center (Bldg. 20004) on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m., for an adult, high-intensity, full-body workout using body weight and basic equipment followed by 30 minutes of indoor cycling. Kids are welcome.

Every Tuesday

- **Summer Reading Toddler & Preschool Story Time STEAM** - Join the SHAPE International Library (Bldg. 307) from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. for an afternoon of stories and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math). The program starts with a story time and ends with a hands-on project. Recommended for ages 2 to 4. No cost. For more information, call DSN 423-5631 or +32(0)65-445631.
- **Self-Defense** - Men and women over age 18 can attend this beginner-level self-defense course hosted by certified instructors from the Spanish Forces every Tuesday from 7 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. at the SHAPE Main Gym Basketball Court. Registration is free. Contact self_defense_shape@outlook.es.
- **POV Orientation Class** is conducted at SHAPE Bldg. 220 in room 104 from 8 a.m. to noon. Schedule an appointment in order to receive study material.

Every Wednesday

- **GOV Orientation Class** is conducted from 8 a.m. to 9:15 a.m. The briefing is mandatory for all US Civilians and military who have to drive a Government vehicle. Candidates must prior pass the POV tests with success.

Through Aug. 31

- **Summer Reading 2018** - You can register online or visit the SHAPE International or Chièvres Library. All you have to do is read, be read to, or listen to an audiobook. Summer Reading 2018 is open to all ages, and you can read in any language. Track the minutes you have read, or listened to an audiobook, and you will receive prizes throughout the summer. If you are on holiday, you have until Aug. 31 to collect your prizes. To register for Summer Reading please either visit the SHAPE International or Chièvres Library, or register online at <https://shapeinternational.beanstack.org/reader365>. If you are a non-US NATO family, select 'Army' when asked which branch of service. For more information, contact DSN 423-5631 or +32 (0)65-445631.

Aug. 17 & Sept. 19

- **Fun for the Family** - Meet new friends at the Chièvres Community Activity Center. Open from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. You can get together a game of pick-up basketball or play on bouncy castles. It's also a great opportunity for newcomers to the community to meet other parents. Open to U.S., NATO, U.S. Mission, and U.S. Embassy ID cardholders. No entrance fee.



Aug. 19

- **INK Mania** - Over 15 tattoo artists will be at the SHAPE Events Center from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entrance is €2 per person. For more information, visit www.shape2day.com.
- **SHAPE Geek Convention** - Over 25 vendors will be at the SHAPE Fest Tent from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Entrance is €2 per person and free for children age 11 and younger. For more information, visit www.shape2day.com.

Aug. 21

- **BOSS Life Skills: Basic Automotive Paint Care Class** - U.S. single and geographically-separated service members of any branch of service and rank are eligible to participate in the class held 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Chièvres Auto Skills Center. Register online at <https://chievres.armymwr.com>. For additional information,

email the BOSS program at usarmy.benelux.id-europe.mbx.boss-program@mail.mil.

Aug. 25

- **Dogs' Day Out** - The Chièvres Kennel is hosting an afternoon of fun for both canine and human! Dogs' Day Out will feature fun dog show with prizes, dog grooming demo, "kissing booth," agility course, dog obedience demo, and food sales. Held in the SHAPE Fest Tent from noon to 3 p.m. It's necessary to sign up in advance because it will not be possible to register during Dogs' Day Out. To register, visit <https://chievres.armymwr.com/promos/dogs-day-out-talent-show-registration>. Volunteers are also needed for the event. For more information, call DSN 361-5436 or +32 (0)68-275436.



Aug. 27/28 and Sept. 10/11/24

- **Host Nation Orientation** - Army Community Service is inviting all service members, civilians, and their family members to participate in Host Nation Orientation Monday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m and Tuesday from 8:45 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tour a Belgian hospital, learn about Belgian customs, sample traditional Belgian cuisine, learn basic French, enjoy a cultural tour of Mons and learn about public transportation and shopping. Registration is required. Call DSN 366-6824 or +32 (0)65-326824.

Aug. 30

- **Train Trip to Brussels** - ACS Relocation Readiness invites newcomers for a day of adventure! Participants will learn how to use Belgian trains, immerse themselves in Belgian culture, and will meet other members of the community. For more information, call DSN 366-6824 or +32(0)65-326824.

Sept. 1

- **Hidden Secrets of Brussels Tour** - Held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Free "Hidden Secrets" tour of Brussels with travel author and journalist, Derek Blyth. Derek, author of many Belgian travel guides, will show some of the hidden secrets of Brussels. The tour will start at the Brussels Central Station and end at the English bookshop, Waterstone's. Sign-up at the SHAPE International Library. Only 20 spots available! For more information, call DSN 423-5631 or +32 (0)65-445631.

Sept. 6

- **Benelux Employment, Volunteer and Career Expo** - Held 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the SHAPE Club. The 2018 Employment and Career Expo will feature guest speakers, informative and interactive workshops, webinars, subject matter experts to critique and tailor resumes, and a networking area with plenty of agencies which are looking to hire highly qualified and motivated military spouses, veterans, retirees and service members transitioning out of the military. Admission is free. Attendees are encouraged to bring their resumes. For more information, call DSN 366-6824 or +32 (0)6532-6824.



Sept. 7-8

- **SHAPE Fest** - Save the date! There will be food and drinks from NATO nations in addition to activities for all ages at the SHAPE Fest Tent. More information coming soon!

Upcoming Organized Trips & Tours

SHAPE Trips & Tours

Serving Brussels, Chièvres and SHAPE. Call

DSN 423-3884 or +32 (0)65-443884.

- Disneyland Paris, **Aug. 18**
- Kevin Hart Comedy Tour in Antwerp, **Aug. 25**
- Ghent & Bruges Guided Tour, **Sept. 1**
- Flower Parade in Zundert, The Netherlands, **Sept. 2**
- Heidelberg & World's Largest "Wurst" & Wine Festival in Bad Dürkheim, Germany, **Sept. 15**
- Cooking Class in Lille, France, **Sept. 22**
- Honfleur, France, **Sept. 29**
- Amsterdam, **Oct. 6**

- Trier, Germany, **Oct. 13**

- London, **Oct. 20**

- Maastricht, The Netherlands, **Oct. 27**

Schinnen Trips & Tours

Call DSN 360-7560 or +31 (0)46-4437560.

- Family Day "Trout Fishing," **Sept. 8**
- Day Trip to the Largest Wine Festival in the World in Bad Dürkheim, Germany, **Sept. 15**
- Prague Express, **Oct. 12-14**
- NFL Game at Wembley Stadium, **Oct. 27-29**

Flower Carpet 2018: More than 500,000 begonias!

By **Christophe Morel**

USAG Benelux Public Affairs

Every two years, the Flower Carpet is displayed on the Grand-Place in Brussels with an intricate design fashioned entirely of begonias. Through Sunday, discover an ephemeral show that you won't forget!

The Flower Carpet is 75 meters long by 24 meters wide. About 120 volunteers are needed to compose the giant floral puzzle with more than 500,000 begonias in less than 8 hours! From the City Hall Balcony, you will have a splendid view of the masterpiece.

This year's theme is "Guanajuato, Cultural Pride of Mexico." Just like Brussels, Guanajuato has a rich tradition in tapestry. It's the first time that the the Flower Carpet on the Brussels Grand-Place adopts a Latin American theme.

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Grand-Place becoming a UNESCO World heritage site, there will be a floral exhibition at the Bourse square with dozens of carpet artists from all over the world.

SCHEDULE

- Visit to the City Hall balcony: Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 10a.m. to 10p.m. (last admission at 9:30 p.m.)
- Sound and light show: Friday to Sunday from 9:30 a.m. to 11 p.m.
- Construction of the Unesco flower carpets for the exhibition "Monuments of Unesco in Flowers": Friday from 8 a.m.to 3 p.m. The official inauguration will be Saturday from 5 p.m. to 6 p.m. You can visit the exhibition all day until Sunday.

Entry for the City Hall Balcony is €6 at the entrance of the City Hall on the day of your visit. It is free for children under age 10.

There is a public parking available near the Grand



The Brussels Grand-Place is carpeted with begonias every two years. (Courtesy photo)

Place on Rue Marché aux Herbes, 104.

Read more about Brussels' flower carpet at <http://www.flowercarpet.brussels/en>. ♦

Belgium loves begonias

Belgium is the world's largest producer of begonias with 35 million bulbs each year! More than 80% of the total production is exported, primarily to the Netherlands, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and Germany.

The robust tuberous begonia gives beauty and freshness to the carpet. A native of the West Indies, the hearty begonia is resistant to all weather conditions: violent winds, rain, cold, and intense sunshine.

Begonias come in a rich palette ranging from the most vivid colours to delicate pastel shades, with in between the many-coloured and white flowers that reflect sunlight so well.



Don't miss night and days views of the Grand-Place, the historical heart of Brussels. (Courtesy photo)

Remain Vigilant

- Maintain situational awareness at all times when attending events involving large crowds.
- Avoid locations which restrict or limit your movement and ability to exit the venue quickly.
- Pre-establish easily recognizable meeting spots to be used as emergency evacuation points where you and your family and friends can gather if needed.
- Move away from fights, incidents and avoid panicked crowds.
- Report any suspicious activity, unattended bags or anything outside of the norm.

Ath ready to celebrate the Parade of Giants

Special to the Gazette

From Aug. 24 to Sept. 8, thousands of visitors gather in Ath to celebrate the famous Ducasse, which holds the distinction of being a UNESCO Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

Goliath of Gath from the Bible and Gallic War hero Ambiorix of the Belgae come to life in Ath every fourth weekend of August. The festival is a chance to see the famous giants, who have danced at the Ducasse d'Ath since the 15th century when it served as a celebration of the consecration of the local St. Julien Church.

The first highlight of the event is held on Friday night. The burning of the giant Goliath's pants takes place at 10 p.m. It is a Belgian tradition that friends of the groom burn a pair of his pants and host a huge party before the wedding.

Saturday starts at noon with the rining of "Julienne", the great bell of the Church St. Julian. Goliath then takes his fiancée from the city hall to the St. Julien Church to be married at 3 p.m. At 4:45 p.m., the newlyweds return to city hall where Goliath is confronted by David, always played by a young boy. Goliath and him provoke each other verbally through a dialogue called the Bonimée. David hurls a stone from a sling at the giant. If David hits the giant, he has won the battle, and the city will have good luck for the next year.

On Sunday, the big parade starts at 9:45 a.m. from the train station and processes through the city. The parade moves very slowly and when the procession gets to the end of the route, it turns around and goes back down the same route in reverse at 3 p.m. If you watch the whole thing in both directions, expect it to last until around 5 p.m.

The parade features eight floats, marching bands, historical groups, and of course seven giants. The giants are each carried by one man. Their weight varies from 242.5 to 286.5 pounds.

On Monday, giants roam the city in the morning with their carriers and receive donations of gratuity from the population. At 5 p.m., ten balloons representing Ath and the villages belonging to it take flight on the Esplanade, with the participation of the Royal Fanfare Union of Saint Martin. Don't miss the fireworks on Sept. 8, the last highlight of the Ducasse.

The biblical story of David and Goliath was influential to this festival along with a mix of fairy tales and folklore. Giants in folklore are huge mythical beings, usually in humanlike form. Battles between giants and men are interpreted as a symbol of the triumph of good over evil.

THE FAMOUS PIE

Ath is located just a few miles from Chièvres Air Base



Mr. and Mrs. Goliath, the stars of the Ducasse, meet in Ath during the town's festival. (Public Domain photo)

on Highway N56. If you plan to go to the city of giants during the festival, taste the famous masteilles pie. The speciality dessert is prepared only one time of the year, when the city allows giants to roam its streets. Ath's traditional masteilles pie is served by the families after the battle between David and Goliath and can be found in local bakeries. Defining the taste is a bit illusive so it's best to taste it for yourself. ♦

Road Closures

If you plan to be in the area, please be aware that some roads will be closed or guarded by the police. Information on road closures will be released by the city of Ath. Check the USAG Benelux Facebook page during the week leading to the festival for road closure updates and other important festival information.

Remain Vigilant

- Maintain situational awareness at all times when attending events involving large crowds.
- Avoid locations which restrict or limit your movement and ability to exit the venue quickly.
- Pre-establish easily recognizable meeting spots to be used as emergency evacuation points where you and your family and friends can gather if needed.
- Move away from fights, incidents and avoid panicked crowds.
- Report any suspicious activity, unattended bags or anything outside of the norm.



Read about events near Chièvres, SHAPE and Brussels.

Through Aug. 25

- **International meetings about the Bluestone in Soignies (6th edition)** - There will be six sculptors at work, exhibitions, visits, shows, activities, and more. The sculptures will be original works and will be made from blocks of bluestone. The town shows off varieties of use of the bluestone, be that in its facades, streets, or in its culture. Held at Centre culturel de Soignies on Place Van Zeeland, 31. For more information, call +32 (0)67-347428 or visit www.sculptures-monumentales.be.

Aug. 17-18

- **Park Rock Festival in Baudour** - The lineup includes K's Choice, BJ Scott, Romano Nervoso and more. Held on Rue du Parc. Open Friday from 6 p.m. to 11:30 p.m., and Saturday from noon to 11:30 p.m. Entry is €10, €15 or €20.

Aug. 18

- **Flea Market in Carnières** - Held on Rue Ernest Petit and Rue Waressaix featuring 200 booths from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Aug. 18/24/25/26

- **Oberbayern in Marche-lez-Ecaussines** - Participate in a beer fest like in Germany! Open from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m., except on Sunday from 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. Held on Rue du Chemin de Fer, 13. No entrance fee.

Aug. 19

- **Volksmarch in Hautrage for 5, 10 or 20 km** - Departs from Place d'Hautrage, 44 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Flea Market in Evere** - Held on Place Saint-Vincent featuring 150 booths from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- **"Les Chiffonnades" in Tournai** - The chiffonnades are set up along the left bank of the river Scheldt. This second hand textile market allows individuals to sell anything closely or loosely related to the world of textiles: clothing, wool, fabric, haberdashery, and more. Held at Quai Notre-Dame and Quai Marché au Poisson. Open from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. No entry fee.

Aug. 24

- **Flea Market in Hoves** - Held on Place de Hoves and around featuring 400 booths from noon to 9 p.m.

Aug. 25

- **Festival "Août en Eclats" in Soignies (14th edition)** - There will be concerts, theater, shows, circus performances, a special village for children, a world market, food, and more. The event will start at 11 a.m. and the last concert will start at 10:30 p.m. Held on Place Verte and Place Van Zeeland. No entry fee. For more information, call +32(0)67-347428 or visit www.aouteneclats.be.

Aug. 26

- **American Day in Kemmel** - Held from noon to 6 p.m. in Heuvelland. This American Style county fair will have a matinee concert, apple pie contest, kid's corner and more. See page 4 for details.



Read about events near Brunssum and Schinnen (in the Netherlands unless otherwise indicated).

Through Aug. 19

- **Haarlem Jazz & More in Haarlem** - It's the largest free jazz festival in Europe. For more information about the program, visit <https://www.haarlemjazzandmore.nl/festivalinfo/>
- **Food Festival in Amersfoort** - The event takes place at the Zoo on Barchman Wuytierslaan, 224. Open from 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. Entry is €5.

Aug. 17-18

- **Fireworks Festival in Scheveningen** - Music and entertainment will start at 8 p.m. There will be two fireworks shows: the first one at 9:45 p.m., and the second one at 10:30 p.m. No entrance fee.

Aug. 17-19

- **Gulpen Beer Fest** - Held in the center of the town. The event starts Friday at 8 p.m., and ends Sunday at 10:30 p.m. No entrance fee.

Aug. 17-20

- **Harvest Festival in Berg aan de Maas** - A cultural spectacle with music and dance groups from Belgium, Germany, Africa, and more. The main highlight is the parade on Sunday. No entrance fee.

Aug. 18

- **"Historisch Festival" in Scheveningen** - The whole festival area will be filled from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. with historic scenes, music, a fish market, and more. Held on Keizerstraat, Werfstraat, Zeilstraat, and Ankerstraat. No entrance fee.

Aug. 18-19

- **Year Market in Greven-Gimbte (GE)** - There will be art, regional specialties, and products. Open from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. No entrance fee.
- **Flower Parade & Show in Leersum** - The parade is on Saturday and starts at 2 p.m. The Art Market is from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The beautiful floats are exhibited Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Entry is €6.50 for adults and €2 for children age 4 to 12 on Saturday, €3 for adults and free for children age 12 and younger on Sunday.
- **New Orleans Jazz Festival Oisterwijk** - The event starts at 8 p.m. on Saturday and 2 p.m. on Sunday. Held on Lindeplein with non-stop live music from two stages. No entrance fee.

Aug. 19

- **La Douce France in Bennekom** - A French market with curiosa, French snacks, lifestyle, and more from 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Held at Boerderij (Farm) Hoekelom on Edeseweg, 122. No entrance fee.

Aug. 23

- **Nostalgic Market from Grandma's Time in Barneveld** - Held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with old crafts, national and international folkloric dance groups, traditional costumes (and parade), traditional regional food, and more. No entrance fee.

Highway Construction and Road Closures

You may experience some delays while driving in Belgium this season. Road construction projects are occurring throughout the country and may result in temporary lane closures and road congestion. We will provide regular updates to ensure that the community is informed and prepared.

Outside the Gate



Obourg-Thieu (E42-E19/A7): The second part of the road construction project started on E42-E19/A7 between Obourg and Thieu, in the direction of Brussels. The speed of traffic is reduced to 50 km/h. From Aug. 20 to 24, access from the R5a (intersection with the N538 and Chaussée du Roeulx in Havré) to Brussels will be closed to traffic. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of September.



Brussels (E42): Try to avoid Place Meiser in Brussels through Aug. 16. One section of this place will remain closed until construction is completed. You will have to follow the deviation or detour.



Binche: Through Aug. 17, traffic and parking will be prohibited on Route de Mons in Binche, from the roundabout of Agaises to the crossroads of Récollets. You will have to follow the deviation.



Brussels: Road construction began in the Reyers-Montgomery Tunnel in both directions and in the Reyers-Meiser Tunnel in the direction of the E40. Drivers who travel to Brussels from the ring are asked to use alternative routes via the A12, the Leopold III Tunnel and the E411. Work is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.



Schinnen (A76): Due to the construction of the new on and off ramps on A76 (Highway Heerlen-Geleen), exit Schinnen #4 from Heerlen towards Geleen is closed. This results in the closure of the hard shoulder on both sides of the highway and a speed restriction of 70 km per hour until Jan. 31, 2019. Traffic should follow the yellow signs directing them to exit #2 Geleen-Beek and then access #2 on the A76 direction to Beek-Schinnen. The new A76 on and off ramps are scheduled to be completed this fall.



Andenne/Daussoux (E42/A15): The three-way yard project between Andenne and Daussoulx has been underway since August 2017. This project involves 15 km in both directions. Two lanes of traffic will be maintained. Work is scheduled to be completed by August 2018.

Please be cautious and patient while driving at all times. If you have questions or would like to report other highway construction sites and road closures, please email the U.S.

Army Garrison Benelux Public Affairs Office at
usarmy.benelux.id-europe.mbx.communication@mail.mil.